3.

THE DANGERS OF NEW DISCIPLINE,

TO

The STATE and CHURCH

Discovered,

FIT TO BE CONSIDERED

By them who seeke (as they tearme it) the *Reformation* of the CHURCH of ENGLAND.

COMPOSED BY A TRVE PROTE-stant, a Loyall Subject, a Loving Fellow Member of the Common-Wealth of England, Scotland, *and* Ireland, *who dayly prayes for* KING *and* PEOPLE *and a Setled peace in all three* KINGDOMES.

Oxford,

Printed for *W. R.* ANN. DOM. 164$.

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A DISCOVRSE

to them who seeke the Reformation (as they terme it) of the CHVRCH of ENGLAND.

BRETHREN,

THe wisdome of governours you must not blame, in that they, forecasting the manifold, strange, and dangerous Innovations, which are more then likely to follow, if your Discipline should take place, have for that cause thought it hitherto a part of their duty, to withstand your endeavours that

way. The rather, for that they have ſeene already ſome ſmall beginnings of the fruits thereof in them, who concurring with you in Iudgment, about the neceſſity of that Diſcipline, have adventured without more adoe to ſeparate themſelves from the reſt of the Church, and to put your ſpeculations in execution. Theſe mens haſtyneſſe, the waryer ſort of you doe not Commend, you wiſh they had held themſelves longer in, and not ſo dangerouſly flowne abroad before the feathers of the cauſe had bene growne. Their errour with mercifull termes yee reprove, nameing them in great commiſeration
1. Pet. 22. of mind, your *poore Brethren.*

2. They, on the contrary ſide, more bitterly accuſe you as their *falſe Brethren*, and againſt you they plead, ſaying, *From your* breſts it is that wee have *ſucked thoſe things, which when yee delivered vnto us, ye termed that heavenly, ſincere, and wholſome milke of Gods word, howſoever yee now abhorre as poyſon, that, which the vertue thereof hath wrought and brought forth in us. Yee ſometimes our Companions, Guides, and familiars, with whom we have had*
Pſal 55.13. *moſt ſweet conſultations are now become our profeſſed Adverſaries, becauſe wee thinke the ſtatute-Congregations in England to be no true Chriſtian-Churches, becauſe wee have ſevered our ſelves from them, and becauſe without their leave or licence that are in civill Authority, wee have ſecretly framed our owne Churches according to the platforme of the word of God. For, of that point betweene you and us, there is no controverſie.*

verſie. Alas! what would you have us to doe? At ſuch time as yee were content to accept us in the number of your owne, your teachings wee heard, wee read your writings: and though wee would, yet ablewee are not to forget with what zeale yee ever have profeſt, that in the Engliſh Congregations (for ſo many of them as bee ordered according unto their owne Lawes) the very publique ſervice of God is fraught, as touching matter, with heaps of intolerable pollutions, and as concerning forme, borrowed from the ſhop of Antichriſt; hatefull both waies in the eyes of the moſt holy: the kind of their Government by Biſhops and Arch-Biſhops Antichriſtian, that Diſcipline which Chriſt hath eſſentially tyed, that is to ſay, ſo united unto his Church that wee cannot account it really to be his Church, which hath not in it the ſame Diſcipline, that very Diſcipline, no leſſe there deſpiſed, then in the higheſt Throne of Antichriſt; all ſuch parts of the word of God, as doe any way concerne that Diſcipline, no leſſe unſoundly taught and interpreted by all authorized Engliſh Paſtors, then by Antichriſts factors themſelves; at Baptiſme Croſſing, at the lords ſupper kneeling; at both, a number of other the moſt notorious badges of Antichriſtian recogniſance uſuall. Being moved with theſe, and the like your effectuall diſcourſes, whereunto wee gave moſt attentive eare, till they entred even into our ſoules, and were as fire within our boſomes, wee thought wee might hereof bee bold to conclude, that ſith no ſuch Antichriſtian Synagogue may bee accompted a true Church of Christ, yee by uſurping all Con-

Pref. againſt Docter Baner.

gregations ordered according to the Lawes of England, as Antichristian, did meane to condemne those congregations, as not being any of them worthy the true name of a Christian Church; Yee tell us now, it is not your meaning. But what meant your often threatnings of them, who professing themselves the inhabitants of Mount Sion, were so louth to depart wholy, as they should, out of Babilon; Whereat our hearts being fearfully troubled, wee durst not, wee durst not continue longer so neere her confines, least her plagues might suddenly overtake us, before wee did cease to bee partakers with her sinnes: for so wee could not chuse but acknowledge with greife what wee were, when they doing evill, wee, by our presence in their Assemblies, seemed to like thereof, or, at leastwise not so earnestly to dislike as became men heartily Zealous of Gods glory. For, adventuring to erect the Discipline of Christ, without the leave of the Christian Magistrate, happily Yee may condemne us as fooles, in that wee hazard thereby our estates and persons, further then you (which are that way more wise) thinke necessary: but of any offence or sinne therein Cõmitted against God, with what Conscience can you accuse us, when your owne positions are, that the things wee observe, should every of them bee dearer unto us then 10000 lives? that they are the peremptory Commandements of God; that no mortall man can dispence with them, & that the Magistrate greivously sinneth, in constraining thereunto; Will Yee blame any man for doing that of his owne accord, which all men should be compelled vnto, which are

not

not willing of thē ſelves? when God Commandeth, ſhall wee anſwer that wee will obey, if ſo be Cæſar *will grant us leave? Is Diſcipline an Eccleſiaſticall matter, or a Civille? If an Eccleſiaſticall, it muſt of neceſſity belong to the duty of the Miniſter. And the Miniſter* (Yee ſay) *holdeth all his Authority of doing whatſoever belongeth unto the ſpirituall* Charge *of the houſe of God, even immediatly from God himſelfe, without dependency upon any Magiſtrate. Whereupon it followeth as we ſuppoſe, that the hearts of the people being willing to bee under the ſcepter of* Chriſt, *the Miniſter of God, into whoſe hands the* Lord *himſelfe hath put that ſcepter, is without all excuſe, if thereby he guide them not. Nor doe we find that hitherto greatly yee have diſliked thoſe Churches abroad, where the people with direction of their Godly Miniſters, have even againſt the will of their Magiſtrate, brought in either the doctrine, or diſcipline of* Iesvs Christ. *For which cauſe wee muſt now thinke the very ſame thing of you which our* Saviour *did ſometimes utter, conceiving falſehearted* Scribes *and* Phariſies, They Say And Doe Not. Thus the fooliſh Barrowiſt deriveth his ſchiſme, by way of concluſion, as to him it ſeemeth, directly and plainly out of your principles. Him, therfore, wee leave to bee ſatiſfied by you from whom he hath ſprung. And if ſuch, by your owne acknowledgment, be perſons dangerous, although as yet, the alterations which they have made are of ſmall and tender growth, the changes likely to enſue within this land, in caſe your deſire ſhould take place, muſt be thought upon. First,

Mat. 3. 23.

3. First, concerning the *supreame power* of the highest, they are no small Prerogatives, which now thereunto belonging, the forme of your discipline will restraine it to resigne. Againe, it may justly be feared, whether our *English Nobility*, when the matter came in Tryall, would contentedly suffer themselves to bee alwayes at the talye, and to stand to the sentence, of a number of meane persons, assisted with the presence of their poore Teacher, a man (as sometimes it hapeneth) though better able to speake, yet no whit apter to judge, then the rest, from whom, bee their dealings never so absurd (unlesse it bee by way of complaint to a Synod) no appeale may bee made unto any one of higher power, in as much as the order of your discipline admitteth no standing inequality of Court, no spirituall Iudge to have any ordinary superior on Earth, but as many supremacies as there are Parishes and severall Congregations.

4. Neither is it altogether without cause, that so many doe feare the overthrow of all Learning, as a threatned sequell of this your intended discipline.

Sapien. 6. 24. For, if the *Worlds preservation depend on the multitude of the wise*, and of that sort the number hereafter be not likely to waxe overgreat, when (that wherewith the sonne of *Syrach* professeth himselfe at the heart greived) *men of understanding are already so little set by*: how should their minds whom the love of so precious a Iewell, filled with secret iealousy, even in regard of the least things, which may

Eccle. 26 29.

any

ny way hinder the flouriſhing eſtate thereof, chuſe, but miſdoubt leaſt this diſcipline which alwaies you match with divine doctrine, as her naturall and true Siſter, bee found unto all kinds of knowledge a ſtep-mother? ſeeing that the greateſt worldly hopes, which are propoſed unto the cheifeſt kinde of learning, yee ſeeke vtterly to extirpate as weeds; and have grounded your Platforme on ſuch propoſitions, as doe in a ſorte undermine thoſe moſt renowned habitations, where through the goodneſſe of Almighty God, all commendable Arts and Sciencies are with exceeding great induſtry hitherto (and ſo may they for ever continue) ſtudied, proceeded in, and profeſt. To charge you as purpoſely bent to the overthrow of that wherein ſo many of you have attained no ſmall perfection, were injurious; only therefore I wiſh that your ſelves did wel conſider how oppoſite certaine your poſitions are unto the ſtate of *Collegiate Societies*, wherein the two *Vniverſities* conſiſt. Thoſe degrees which their Statutes binde them to take, are by your lawes taken away; your ſelves who have ſought them yee ſo excuſe, as that yee would have men to thinke yee iudge them not allowable, but tolerable only, and to be borne with for ſome helpe which yee finde in them unto the furtherance of your purpoſes, till the corrupt eſtate of the Church may be better reformed. Your Lawes forbidding Eccleſiaſtical perſons vtterly the exerciſe of Civill power, muſts needs deprive the Heads and Maſters in the ſame *Colledges* of all ſuch authority

as now they exercise either at home, by punishing the faults of those, who, not as Children to their Parents by the Law of Nature, but altogether by Civill authority are subject unto them, or abroad, by keeping Courts amongst their Tenants. Your Lawes, makeing permanent inequality amongst Ministers, a thing repugnant to the Word of God, enforce those *Colledges*, the *Seniors* whereof are all or any part of them Ministers, under the government of a Maister in the same vocation, to choose as oft as they meet together a new *President*. For, if so yee judge it necessary to doe in *Synods*, for the avoyding of permanent inequality amongst *Ministers*, the same cause must needs, even in these *Collegiate Assemblies*, enforce the like. Except peradventure yee mean to avoyd all such absurdities by dissolving those Corporations, and by bringing the *Universities* unto the forme of the *Schoole of Geneva*. Which thing men the rather are inclined to looke for, in asmuch as the Ministery, whereinto their Founders with singular providence have by the same Statutes appointed them necessarily to enter at a certaine time, your lawes binde them much more necessarily to forbear, till some parish abroad call for them.

Humb. motion to the L. L. P. 50.

Your opinion concerning the *Law Civill* is, that the knowledge thereof might bee spared, as a thing which this Land doth not need, *Professors* in that kinde being so few, yee are the bolder to spurne at them, and not to dissemble your minds concerning theire removall: in whose studyes, although my

selfe

ſelfe have not much beene converſant, nevertheleſſe, exceeding great cauſe Iſee there is to wiſh, that thereunto more encouragement were given, as well for the ſingular treaſures of Wiſdome therein contained, as alſo for the great uſe wee have thereof, both in deciſion of certaine kinds of cauſes, ariſeing dayly within our ſelves, and eſpecially for commerce with Nations abroad, Whereunto that knowledge is moſt requiſite.

5. The reaſons wherewith yee would perſwade, that *Scripture* is the only rule to frame all our Actions by, are in every reſpect as effectuall for proofe, that the ſame is the only Law whereby to determine all our *Civill* Controverſies. And then what doth let, but as thoſe men have their deſire, who frankly broach it already, that the worke of *Reformation* will never be perfected till the Law of *Jeſus Chriſt* bee received alone; ſo pleaders and Counſellours may bring their bookes of the *Common Law*, and beſtow them as the *Students* of curious and needleſſe Arts did theirs in the *Apoſtles* time? I leave them to ſcan how farre thoſe words of yours may reach, wherein yee declare, that whereas many houſes lye waſte through inordinate ſuites in Law, *This one thing will ſhew the excellency of Diſcipline for the wealth of the Realme, and quiet of Subjects; that the Church is to cenſure ſuch a party who is apparently troubleſome and contentious, and without* REASONABLE CAVSE *upon a meere will and ſtomacke doth vex and moleſt his Brother, and trouble the Country.* For my owne part

Act. 19. 19.

Humb. motion P. 74.

I doe not see, but that it might agree very well with your *Princ ples*, if your discipline were fully planted, even to send out your writs of surceace unto all *Courts of England* besides, for the most things handled in them. A great deale further I might proceed, and descend lower.

Counterp.6. P. 108.

6. But for as much as against all these and the like difficultyes your answer is, that wee ought to search what things are consonant to Gods word, not which be most for our owne ease, and therefore that your discipline being (for such is your errour) the absolute commandement of Almighty God, it must bee received, although the world by receiving it should be cleane turned vpside downe, herein lyeth the greatest danger of all. For whereas the name of divine Authority is used to countenance these things which are not the commandements of God, but your owne erronious collections; on him you must father whatsoever yee shall afterwards be led either to doe, in withstanding the Adversaries of your cause, or to thinke, in maintenance of your doeings; and what this may bee God doth know. In such kindes of errours, the minde once imagining it selfe to seeke execution of Gods will, laboureth forthwith to remove both things and persons which any way hinder it from takeing place, and in such cases if any strange or new thing seeme requisite to be done, a strang and new opinion concerning the lawfullnesse thereof is withall received and broached vnder countenance of divine Authority.

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7. One example herein may serve for many, to shew that false opinions touching the will of God to have things done are wont to bring forth mighty and violent practises against the hinderances of them; and those practises new opinions more pernicious then the first, yea most extreamely opposite unto that which the first did seem to intend, where the people took upon them the Reformation of the Church by casting out Popish superstition, they having received from their Pastours a generall instruction, that *whatsoever the heavenly Father hath not planted must be rooted out*, proceeded in some forraigne places so farre, that downe went Oratories and the very Temples of God themselves. For, as they chanced to take the compasse of their Commission stricter or larger, so their dealings were accordingly more or lesse moderate. Among others, there sprung up presently one kinde of men; with whole zeale and forwardnesse the rest being compared, were thought to be marvellous cold and dull. These grounding themselves on rules more generall; that *whatsoever the Law of Christ commandeth not, thereof* Antichrist *is the Authour, and whatsoever* Antichrist *or his adherents did in the world the true Professours of Christ are to undoe*; and found out many things more then others had done, the extirpation whereof was in their Conceipt as necessary as of any thing before removed. Hereupon they secretly made their dolefull complaints every where as they went, that albeit the World did begin to professe

Mat. 15. 13.

Anabaptists.

some dislike of that which was evill in the kingdome of darknesse, yet fruits worthy of a true repentance were not seene; and that if men did repent as they ought, they must endeavour to purge the truth of all manner of evill, to the end there might follow a new World afterward, wherein righteousnes only should dwell. Private repentance they said must appeare by every mans fashioning his owne life contrary unto the custome and orders of this present World, both in greater things and in lesse. To this purpose they had alwayes in their mouthes those great things, Charity, Faith, the true Feare of God, the Crosse, the Mortification of the flesh. All their exhortations were to set light of the things in this World, to count riches and honours vanity, and in token thereof, not only to seek neither, but if men were possessours of both, even to cast away the one and resigne the other, that all men might see their unfained conversation unto Christ. They were sollicitours of men to fasts, to often meditations of heavenly things, and as it were conferences in secret with God, by prayers not framed according to the frozen manner of the World: but expressing such fervent desires as might even force God to hearken to them. Where they found men in diet, attire, furniture of house, or any other way observers of Civility and decent order, such they reproved as being carnally and earthly minded. Every word otherwise then severely and sadly uttered, seemed to pierce like a sword through them. If any man were pleasant, their

Guy des Brez contre l'erreur des Anabapt. pag. 4.

pag. 5.

pag. 16.
pag. 118.
pag. 119.

pag. 120.
pag. 116.

pag. 124.

manner

manner was presently with sighs to repeat these words of our Saviour Christ, *Woe bee to you which now laugh for you shall lament.* So great was their delight to be alwayes in trouble, that such as did quietly lead their lives, they judged of all other men to be in most dangerous case. They so much affected to crosse the ordinary custome in every thing, that when other mens use was to put on better attire, they would be sure to shew themselves openly abroad in worse, the ordinary names of the dayes in the week they thought it a kind of prophanenesse to use, and therefore, accustomed to make no other distinction then by number; the 1, 2, 3, day. Luk. 6. 12. pag. 117.

8. From this they proceed unto publique Reformation. First, Ecclesiasticall, and then Civill. Touching the former they boldly avouched that themselves only had the truth. Which thing upon perill of their lives they would at all times defend; and that since the Apostles lived, the same was never before in all points sincerely taught. Wherefore that things might be brought againe to that ancient integrity which Iesus Christ by his word requireth, they began to controule the Ministers of the Gospell, for attributing so much force and vertue unto the scriptures of God read; whereas the truth was, that when the word is said, to engender faith in the heart and to convert the soule of man, or to work any such spirituall divine effect, these speeches are not thereunto appliable as it is read or preached, but as it is ingrafted into us by the power of the Holy Ghost, opening pag. 40.

pening the eyes of our understanding, and so revealing the mysteries of God, according to that which
Ier.31.34. *Ieremy* promised before should be, saying, *I will put my law in their inward parts, and I will write it in their hearts.* The book of God they notwithstading for the
pag. 29. most part so admired, that other disputation against their opinions, then only by allegation of scripture,
pag. 27. they would not heare, besides it they thought no other writings in the World should be studyed, insomuch that one of their great Prophets exhorting them to cast away all respects unto humane writings, so farre to this motion they condescended that as many as had any Bookes, save the holy Bible, in their Custody, they brought and set them publiquely on fire.

9. When they and their Bibles were alone together, what strange fantasticall opinion soever at any time entred into their heads, their use was to thinke the spirit taught it them. Their frensies concerning our Saviours Incarnation: the state of soules departed and such like, are things needlesse to be rehearsed. And forasmuch as they were of the same suit with those, of whom the Apostle speaketh, saying,
2. Tim.3.7. *They are still learning but never attaining to the knowledge of truth*, it was no marvaile to see them every day broach some new thing never heard of before, which restlesse levity they did interpret to be their growing to spirituall perfection,
pag. 65. and a proceeding from faith to faith. The differen-
pag. 66. ces among them grew in a manner infinite, so that scarcely

ſcarcely was there found any one of them, the forge of whoſe braine was not poſſeſt with ſome ſpeciall myſtery. Whereupon, although their mutuall contentions were moſt fiercely proſecuted among themſelves, yet when they came to defend the common cauſe, common to them all againſt the Adverſaries of their factions, they had wayes to lick one another whole, the founder in his owne perſwaſion excuſing *The deare Brethren*, which were not ſo farre enlightned, and profeſſing a charitable hope of the mercy of God towards them, notwithſtanding their ſwarving from him in ſome things. Their owne Miniſters they highly magnifyed, as men whoſe vocation was from God: the reſt, their manner was diſdainfully to terme *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, to accompt their calling an humane creature, and to detaine the people, as much as might be, from hearing of them. As touching Baptiſme adminiſtred in the Church of *Rome*, they judged to be an execrable mockery, and no Baptiſme, both, becauſe the Miniſters thereof in the Papacy are wicked Idolaters, lewd perſons, Theeves and Murderers, curſed creatures, ignorant beaſts; and alſo, that for to baptize is a proper action belonging unto none but the Church of Chriſt, whereas *Rome* is *Antichriſts* Synagogue. The cuſtome of uſing *God-fathers* and *God-mothers* at Chriſtnings they ſcorned. *Baptizing of Infants*, although confeſt by themſelves to have been continued even ſithence the very Apoſtles owne times, yet they altogether condemned, partly, becauſe ſundry

pag. 135.
pag. 25.
pag. 71.
pag. 124.
pag. 764.
pag. 748.
pag. 512.
pag. 518.

pag.722. errours are of no leſſe antiquity: and partly becauſe there is no commandement in the Goſpell of Chriſt which ſaith Baptize Infants, but he contrariwiſe ſaying, *Goe preach and Baptize*, doth appoint that the Miniſter of Baptiſme ſhall in that action firſt adminiſter doctrine, and then Baptiſme, as alſo in ſaying, pag.688. *whoſoever doth believe and is Baptized*, he appointeth that the perſon, to whom Baptiſme is adminiſtred, ſhall firſt beleeve, and then be Baptized; to the end that beleeving may goe before this Sacrament in the receiver, no otherwiſe then preaching in the giver, ſith equally in both, the law of Chriſt declareth, not only what things are required, but alſo in what or- pag. 38. der they are required. The *Euchariſt* they received (pretending our Lord and Saviours example) after Supper: and for avoyding all thoſe impieties which have beene grounded upon the myſticall words of Chriſt, *This is my body, this is my bloud*, they thought it not ſafe to mention either body or blood in that pag. 122. Sacrament, but rather to abrogate both, and to uſe no words but theſe, *Take, eat, declare the death of our Lord; Drinke, ſhew forth our Lords death.*

In Rites and Ceremonies their profeſſion was, hatred of all conformity with the Church of *Rome:* for which cauſe they would rather endure any torment, then obſerve the *ſolemne feſtivalls* which others did, in aſmuch as *Antichriſt* (they ſaid) was the firſt Inventor of them.

10. The pretended end of their Civill Reformation was, that Chriſt might have dominion over all; that

that all Crownes and Scepters might bee throwne downe at his feet; that no other might raigne over Christian men but he; no Regiment keep them in awe but his discipline; amongst them no sword at all to be carried besides his, the sword of Spirituall Excommunication. For this cause they laboured with all their might in overturning the Seates of Magistracy, because Christ hath said, *Kings of Nations*; in abolishing the execution of Iustice, because Christ hath said, *resist not evill*; in forbidding Oathes the necessary meanes of Iudiciall Tryall, because Christ hath said, *Sweare not at all*; finally, in bringing in community of goods, because Christ by his Apostles hath given the World such example, to the end that men might excell one another, not in wealth, the pillar of secular authority, but in vertue. pag. 841. pag. 849.

11. These men at the first were only pitied in their errour, and not much withstood by any; the great humility, zeale and devotion, which appeared to bee in them was in all mens opinion a pledge of their harmlesse meaning. The hardest that men of sound Iudgement conceived of them, was but this, *O quàm honestâ voluntate miseri errant*; *with how good a meaning these poore soules doe evill!* *Luther* made request unto *Frederick* Duke of *Saxony*, that within his dominion they might be favourably dealt with and spared, for that (their errour exempted) they seemed otherwise right good men. By meanes of which mercifull toleration they gathered strength, much more then was safe for the state of the Com- pag. 40. *Lactant. Just. lib. 5. cap. 19.* pag. 6.

mon-wealth wherein they lived. They had their ſecret corner-meetings and aſſemblies in the night, the people flocked unto them by thouſands. The means
Pag. 4. 20. whereby they both allured and retained ſo great multitudes were moſt effectuall; firſt, a wonderfull
Pag. 55. ſhew of zeale towards God, wherewith they ſeemed to bee even rapt in every thing they ſpake. Secondly, an hatred of ſinne and a ſingular love of integrity, which men did thinke to be much more then ordinary in them, by reaſon of the Cuſtome which they had to fill the eares of the people with invectives againſt their authorized Guids, aſwell Spirituall as Civill. Thirdly, the bountyfull releife wherewith they eaſed the broken eſtate of ſuch needy Creatures as were in that reſpect the more apt to be drawne away. Fourthly, a tender Compaſſion which they were thought to take upon the miſeries of the Common ſort, over whoſe
Pag. 6. 7. heads their manner was, even to powre downe ſhowrs of teares, complaining that *no reſpect was had unto them*, that *their goods were devoured by wicked Cormorants*, their *perſons had in contempt, all liberty both temporall and ſpirituall taken from them*, that *it was high time for god now to heare their groanes and to ſend them deliverance:* Laſtly, a cunning ſlight which they had to ſtroake and ſmooth up the minds of their followers, as well by appropriating unto them all the favourable Titles, the good words and the gratious promiſies in *Scripture*; as alſo by caſting the contrary alwaies on the heads of ſuch as were ſever-

red

ed from that retinue. Whereupon, the *Peoples* common acclamations unto ſuch deceivers was, *Theſe are verely the men of God, theſe are his true and ſincere Prophets*. If any ſuch Prophet or man of God did ſuffer by order of law condigne and deſerved puniſhment, were it for Fellony, Rebellion, Murder or what elſe, the people (ſo ſtrangely were their hearts inchanted) as though bleſſed *Saint Stephen* had bene againe Martyred, did lament that God tooke away his moſt deare ſervants from them. Pag. 27.

12. In all things beeing fully perſwaded, that what they did it was Obedience to the will of God, and that all men ſhould doe the like; there remained after ſpeculation, practiſe, whereby the whole world thereunto (if it were poſſible) might be framed. This they ſaw could not be done without mighty oppoſition and reſiſtance: againſt which to ſtrengthen themſelves, they ſecretly entred into a league of aſſociation. And peradventure, conſidering that although they were many, yet long warrs would in time waſt them out; they began to thinke whether it might not be that God would have them doe for their ſpeedy and mighty increaſe, the ſame which ſometime Gods owne choſen people, the people of *Iſraell* did. Glad and faine they were to have it ſo: which very deſire was it ſelfe apt to breed both an opinion of poſſibility, and a willingneſſe to gather arguments of likelyhood that ſo God himſelfe would have it. Nothing more cleare unto their ſeeming, then that *a new Ieruſalem* beeing Pag. 6.

often ſpoken of in *Scripture*, they undoubtedly were themſelves that new *Ieruſalem*, and the old did by way of a certaine figurative reſemblance ſignifie what they ſhould bee and doe. Here they drew in a Sea of matter by applying of all things unto their owne company, which are any where ſpoken concerning divine favours, and benefits beſtowed upon the old common wealth of *Iſraell*, concluding that as *Iſraell* was delivered out of *Egypt*, ſo they ſpiritually out of the *Egypt* of this *Worlds* ſervile thraldome unto ſinne and ſuperſtition; as *Iſraell* was to root out the Idolatrous Nations, and to plant inſtead of them a people which feared God, ſo the ſame Lords good will and pleaſure was now, that theſe new *Iſraelites* ſhould under the Conduct of other *Ioſhuas*, *Sampſons*, and *Gideons* performe a worke no leſſe miraculous in caſting out violently the wicked from the earth, and eſtabliſhing the kingdome of *Chriſt* with perfect liberty: and therefore as the cauſe why the Children of *Iſraell* tooke unto one man many wives, might be, leaſt the caſualties of warre ſhould any way hinder the promiſe of God concerning their multitude from takeing effect in them, ſo it was not unlike that for the neceſſary propagation of *Chriſts* kingdome under the Goſpell, the Lord was content to allow aſmuch. Now whatſoever they did in ſuch ſort collect out of *Scripture*, when they came to juſtifie or perſwade it unto others, all was *the heavenly fathers appointment, his commandement, his will and charge*. Which thing is

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the point, in regard whereof I have gathered this declaration. For my purpoſe herein is to ſhew, that when the minds of men are once erroniouſly perſwaded, that it is the will of God to have thoſe things done which they fancy; their opinions are as thornes in their ſides, never ſuffering them to take reſt till they have brought their ſpeculations into practiſe; the reſts & impediments of which practiſe, their reſtleſſe deſire and ſtudy to remove, leadeth them every day forth by the hand into other more dangerous opinions, ſometimes quite and cleane contrary to their firſt pretended meanings; ſo as what will grow out of ſuch errours as goe maſked under the cloake of divine Authority, impoſſible it is that ever the witt of man ſhould imagine, till time have brought forth the fruits of them; for which cauſe it behooveth wiſdome to feare the ſequells thereof, even beyond all apparent cauſe of feare. Theſe men in whoſe mouthes at the firſt ſounded nothing but only mortification of the fleſh, were come at the length to thinke they might lawfully have their ſix or ſeven Wives a peece. They which at the firſt, thought judgement and juſtice it ſelfe a mercyleſſe cruelty; accompted at the length their owne hands ſanctified, with being imbrued in *Chriſtian* blood; they, who at the firſt were wont to beat downe all dominion and to urge againſt poore *Conſtables, Kings of Nations*, had at the length both *Conſulls* and *Kings* of their owne erection; finally, they which could not brooke at the firſt, that any man

ſhould

ſhould ſeek, no not by law, the recovery of goods injuriouſly taken or withheld from him; were growne at the laſt to thinke, they could not offer unto God more acceptable ſervice, then by turning their Adverſaries cleane out of houſe and home, and
pag. 41. by inriching themſelves with all kind of ſpoyle and pillage, which thing being layd to their charge, they had in all readineſſe their anſwer, that now the time was come, when according to our Saviours promiſe,
Mat. 5. 5. *The meeke ones muſt inherit the earth*, and that their title hereunto, was the ſame which the Righte-
Exod. 11. 2. ous *Iſraelites* had unto the goods of the wicked *Egyptians*.

13. Wherfore ſith the World hath had in theſe men ſo freſh experience how dangerous ſuch active errours are, it muſt not offend you, though touching the ſequell of your preſent miſperſwaſions much more be doubted, then your owne intents and purpoſes doe happily ayme at. And yet your words allready are ſomewhat, when ye affirme that *your Paſtours, Elders, Doctours, and Deacons, ought to bee in*
Mart: in his 3. libel. P. 28. *this Church of* England, *whither his Majeſty and our State will, or no*; when for the animating of your Confederates, yee publiſh the Muſters which yee have made of your owne bands, and proclaime to amount unto, I know not how many thouſands; when yee threaten, that *ſith neither ſuits to the* Parliament, *nor ſupplications to our* Convocation-Houſe, *neither your defences by writing, nor challenges of diſputation in behalfe of that cauſe are able to prevayle,*

vayle, wee muſt blame our ſelves, if to bring in diſci-pline ſome ſuch meanes bee uſed hereafter, as ſhall cauſe all our hearts to ake. That things doubtfull are to be conſtrued in the better part, is a principle that ought not to be followed in matters concerning the publique ſtate of a Common-wealth. But howſoever theſe and the like ſpeeches be accompted as arrowes idly ſhot at randome, without either eye had to any marke, or regard to their lighting place: hath not your longing deſire for the practiſe of your diſci-pline, brought the matter already unto this demur-rer amongſt you; whether the people and their godly Paſtours, that way affected, ought not to make ſepa-ration from the reſt, and to begin the exerciſe of di-ſcipline, without the licence of Civill powers, which licence they ſought for, and are not heard? Upon which queſtion, as ye have now divided your ſelves, the warier ſort of you takeing the one part, and the forwarder in zeale the other; ſo in caſe theſe earneſt ones ſhould prevaile: what other ſequell can any wiſe man imagine, but this; that having firſt reſolv-ed, that attempts for diſcipline without ſuperiours, are lawfull, it will follow in the next place to be diſ-puted what may bee attempted againſt ſuperiours, which will not have the ſcepter of that diſcipline to rule over them? Demonſtr. in the Preface.

14. Yea even by you, which have ſtayed your ſelves from running headlong with the other ſort, ſomewhat notwithſtanding there hath bene done, without the leave or likeing of your lawfull Superi-

ours, for the exerciſe of a part of your diſcipline amongſt the *Clergy* thereunto addicted. And leaſt examination of principall parties therein, ſhould bring thoſe things to light, which might hinder and let your proceedings; behold for a barre againſt that impediment, one opinion yee have newly added unto the reſt, even upon this occaſion, an opinion to exempt you frō takeing Oathes; which may turne to the moleſtation of your Brethren in that cauſe. The next neighbour opinion, whereunto when occaſion requireth, may follow for diſpenſation with Oathes already taken, if they afterwards be found to import a neceſſity of detecting ought which may bring ſuch good men into trouble or damage whatſoever the cauſe bee. O mercyfull God! what mans witt is there able to ſound the depth of theſe dangerous and fearfull evills, whereinto our weake and impotent nature is inclinable to ſinke it ſelfe, rather then to ſhew an acknowledgment of errour in that, which once wee have unadviſedly taken upon us to defend, againſt the ſtreame, as it were, of a contrary publique reſolution? Wherefore if wee any thing reſpect their errour, who being perſwaded even as yee are, have gone further upon that perſwation then yee allowe, if wee regard the preſent eſtate of the *higheſt Governour* placed over us, if the quality and diſpoſition of our *Nobles*, if the Orders and Lawes of our famous *Vniverſities*, of the profeſſion of the *Civill* or the practiſe of the *Common-Law* amongſt us, if the miſchieves, whereinto even before our eyes, ſo many

ny others have fallen headlong from no leſſe plauſible and faire beginings, then yours are: there is in every of theſe conſiderations moſt juſt cauſe to feare, leaſt our haſtineſſe to imbrace a thing of ſo perillous Conſequence, ſhould cauſe poſterity to feele thoſe evills, which as yet are more eaſy for us to prevent, then they would be for them to remedy.

The Concl. of all.

15. The beſt and ſafeſt way therefore for you, my deare Brethren, is, to call your deeds paſt to a new reckoning, to examine the cauſe yee have taken in hand, and to try it even point by point, Argument by Argument, with all the diligent exactneſſe yee can; to lay aſide the Gall of that bitterneſſe wherein your minds have hitherto overabounded, and with meekneſſe to ſearch the Truth; thinke yee are men, deeme it not impoſſible for yee to erre; ſift unpartially your owne hearts, whether it bee the force of reaſon or vehemency of affection which hath bred and ſtill doth feed theſe opinions in you. If truth doe any where manifeſt it ſelfe, ſeeke not to ſmother it with gloſing deluſion, acknowledge the greatneſſe thereof, and thinke it your beſt victory when the ſame doth prevaile over you.

16. That yee have bene earneſt in ſpeaking and writing againe and againe the contrary way, ſhall bee no blemiſh nor diſcredit at all unto you. Amongſt ſo many ſo huge volumes as the infinite paines of *Saint Auguſtine* hath brought forth, what one hath gotten him greater love, commendation, and honour then the booke wherein he carefully collecteth

his owne oversights, and sincerely condemneth them? Many speeches there are of *Iobes*, whereby his wisdome and other vertues may appeare: but the glory of an ingenious mind hee hath purchased by these words only, *Behold, I will lay mine hand on my mouth, I have spoken once, yet will I not therefore maintaine argument: yea twice, howbeit for that cause, further I will not proceede.* Farre more comfort it were for us (so small is the joy wee take in these strifes) to labour under the same yoake, as men that looke after the same eternall reward of their labours, to bee injoyed with you in bands of indissoluble love and amity, to live as if our persons being many, our Soules were but one, rather thē in such dismembred sort, to spend our few & wretched dayes in a tedious prosecutiō of wearysome contentions, the end whereof, if they have not some speedy end will bee heavy even on both sides. Brought already wee are, even to that estate, which *Gregory Nazianzene* mournfully described, saying.

Iob. 39. 37.

My mind leadeth mee (sith there is no other remedy) to fly and to convey my selfe into some corner out of sight, where I may scape from this cloudy tempest of malicious nesse, whereby all parts are entred into a deadly warre amongst themselves, and that little remnant of love which was, is now consumed to nothing. The only godlynesse wee glory in, is to find out somewhat whereby wee may Iudge others to bee ungodly. Each others faults wee observe, as matter of exprobration, and not of greife. By these meanes wee are growne hatefull

G. Naz. Apol.

hatefull in the eyes of the heathens themſelves, and (which woundeth us the more deeply) able we are not to deny, but that wee have deſerved their hatred. With the better ſort of our owne, our fame and Credit is cleane loſt. The leſſe wee are to marvaile, if they Judge vilely of us, who although wee did well, would hardly allow thereof. On our backs they alſo build, that are lewd, and what wee object one againſt another, the ſame they uſe to the utter ſcorne and diſgrace of us all. This wee have gained by our mutuall home-diſſentions. This wee are worthyly rewarded with, which are more forward to ſtrive, then becometh men of vertuous and mild diſpoſition. But our truſt with the almighty is, that with us, contentions are now at their higheſt floate, and that the day will come (for what cauſe of diſpaire is there,) when the paſſions of former enmity being allayed, wee ſhall with ten times redoubled tokens of our unfainedly reconciled love, ſhew our ſelves each towards other the ſame, which *Ioſeph* and the *Brethren* of *Ioſeph*, were at the time of their intervew in *Egypt*. Our comfortable expectation, and moſt Thirſty deſire whereof, what man ſoever amongſt you ſhall any wayes help to ſatisfie (as wee truely hope there is no one amongſt you but ſome way or other will) the bleſſing of the God of peace, both in this world, and in the world to come, be upon him, more then the ſtarres of the firmament in number. AMEN.

ECCLES. POLIT.

LIB. 5. §. 79. ad fin.

Such is the generall deteſtation of robbing God or the church; that whereas nothing doth either in peace or warre more uphold mens reputation then proſperous ſucceſſe, becauſe, in common conſtruction, unleſſe notorious improbitie bee joyned with proſperity, it ſeemeth to argue favour with God, they which once have ſtained their hands with theſe odious ſpoiles, doe thereby faſten unto all their actions an eternall prejudice; in reſpect whereof, for that it paſſeth through the world as an undoubted rule and principle, that ſacrilege is open defiance to god, whatſoever afterward they vndertake, if they proſper in it, men reckon it but *Dionyſius* his navigation, and if any thing befall them otherwiſe, it is not, as commonly, ſo in them aſcribed to the great uncertainty of caſuall events, wherein the providence of God doth controle the purpoſes of men, oftentimes much more for their good, then if all things did anſwere fully their hearts deſire, but the cenſure of the world is ever directly

againſt

againſt them, both [a] bitter and peremptory.

To make ſuch actions therefore leſſe odious, and to mitigate the envy of them, many colourable ſhifts and inventions have beene uſed, as if the world did hate only wolves, and thinke the fox a godly creature. The time [b] it may bee will come, when they that either violently have ſpoiled, or thus ſmoothly defrauded God, ſhall finde they did but deceive themſelves. In the meane while, there will bee alwayes ſome ſkilfull perſons, which can teach a way how to grind treatably the Church, with jawes that ſhall ſcarce move, and yet devoure in the end more then they that come ravening with open mouth, as if they would worrie the whole in an inſtant. Others alſo who have waſtfully eaten out their owne patrimony, would be glad to repaire if they might their decayed eſtates, with the ruine they care not of what, nor of whom, ſo the ſpoiles were theirs; whereof in ſome part if they happen to ſpeede, yet commonly they are men borne under that conſtellation, which maketh them, I know not how, as vnapt to enrich themſelves as they are ready to impoveriſh others; it is their lot to ſuſtaine during life, both the miſery of beggars, and infamy of robbers.

But though no other plague and revenge ſhould follow ſacrilegious violations of holy things, the naturall diſgrace and ignominy, the very turpitude of ſuch actions in the eyes of a wiſe vnderſtanding

[a] *Novimus multa regna & reges eorum propterea cecidiſſe, quia Eccleſias ſpoliaverunt, reſq; earum vaſtaverunt, alienaverunt vel diripuerunt; Epiſcopiſq; & ſacerdotibus, atque quod majus eſt, Eccleſiis eorum abſtulerunt; & pugnantibus dederunt. Quapropter nec fortes in bello, nec in fide ſtabiles fuerunt, nec victores extiterunt, ſed terga multi vulnerati, & plures interfecti verterunt, regnáque & regiones, & quod pejus eſt, regna cæleſtia perdiderunt, atque propriis hæreditatibus caruerunt, & hactenus carent. verba Caroli Mag. in Capital. Caral. l. 7. c. 104.* [b] *Turno tempus erit magno cùm optaverit emptum. Intactum Pallanta, & cùm ſpolia iſta, diemq; Oderit. virgil. Æen. lib. 10.*

heart

heart, is it selfe [c] a heavy punishment. Men of vertuous quality, are by this sufficiently moved to beware, how they answer and requite the mercyes of God with injuries, whether openly or indirectly offered.

By meanes whereof the church most commonly for gold hath flanell, and whereas the usuall saw of old was, *Glaucus his changeing*, the proverbe is now, *A Church bargaine.*

And for feare lest covetousnesse alone should linger out the time too much, and not bee able to make havocke of the house of God, with thatexpedition which the mortall enemy thereof did vehemently wish, he hath by certaine strong inchauntments, so deeply bewitcht religion it selfe, as to make it in the end an earnest sollicitor, and an eloquent perswader of sacrilege, urging confidently, that the very best service which men of power can doe to Christ, is without any more ceremony, [d] *to sweepe all*, and to

[c] ἡ τῶν πραγμάτων ἀισχύνη οὐδεμιᾶς ἐλάττων ζημία τοῖς γε σώφροσιν. *Demost. Pœnam non dico legum, quas sæpe perrumpunt; sed ipsius turpitudinis quæ acerbissima est, non vident. Cic. Off. lib. 3. Impunitu credis esse quæ invisa sunt, aut ullum supplicium gravius existimas publico odio? Senec. de Benef. l. 3. c. 17.*

[d] *Huc ventum videtur (quod non sine gemitu dixerim) ut magna hominum pars credat sese tùm demum verè regnum Antichristi evasisse, si cum bonis Ecclesiæ ludant pro libitu.* Calvin. *Ep. 33. vide etiam ep. 13. 65. 68. 108. vbi de hac sacrilegâ dissipatione queritur.*

In the time of Popery, the Church of *Geneva* was very richly endowed with great revenewes. At the reformation, *Calvin* and *Farell* called upon the magistrates, as they would answer it to God, to imploy all that holy stock only to pious and holy uses, assureing them they could not any other wayes bestow any part of it, without the guilt of horrible Sacrilege. (So it is a degree of Sacrilege, any way to alter the wills and intentions of founders, so far as they are tolerable.) They promised fairely; but haveing possessed themselves of the goods and patrimony of the Clergy, they set apart some small portions for the University, and the ministers, bestowing the rest in fortifieing their walls, and furnishing their magazine against the Bishop (the lord and owner of the towne) and other more base uses.

Calvin seeing this Sacrilege, and detesting it, was wont to say with great griefe, *I see wee have taken the purse from Judas, and given it to the Divell.* Severall men of credit have heard this related by a grave learned French minister yet liveing (or very lately) in England.

leave

leave the Church as bare, as in the day it was first borne; that fulneſſe of bread having made the children of the houſehould wanton, it is without any ſcruple to be taken away from them, and throwne to doggs; that they which layd the prices of their lands, as offerings at the Apoſtles feet, did but ſow the ſeeds of ſuperſtition; that they which did endow Churches with lands, poyſoned religion; that Tithes and oblations are now in the ſight of God as the ſacrificed bloud of goates, that if wee give him our hearts, and affections, our goods are better beſtowed otherwiſe; that *Irenaus*, *Policarps* diſciple, ſhould not have ſaid, *wee offer unto God our goods, as tokens of thankfullneſſe for what wee doe receive*; neither *Origen*, *hee that worſhippeth God, muſt by guifts and oblations acknowledge him the Lord of all*; in a word, that to give unto God is error, reformation of error, to take from the Church, that which the blindneſſe of former ages did unwiſely give. By theſe or the like ſuggeſtions received with all joy, and with like ſedulity practiſed in certaine parts of the Chriſtian world, they have brought to paſſe, that as *David* doth ſay of man, ſo it is in hazard to bee verified concerning the whole religion and ſervice of God; *The time thereof may peradventure fall out to be threeſcore & ten years, or if ſtrength doe ſerve, unto fourſcore, what followeth, is like to be ſmall joy for them, whatſoever they be that beholdit.*

Thus have the best things beene overthrowne, not so much by puissance, and might of adversaries, as through defect of counsell in them, that should have upheld and defended the same.

FINIS.

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